The House of Lords

By B. B. Valentine

THOSE who discourse learnedly on the present revolutionary crisis in Great Britain and the limitation of the veto of the Lords seem to have forgotten that the House of Lords was abolished in February, 1649, as "useless and dangerous" by what was known as the "Rump Parliament."

For similar reasons it abolished the office of King. All members of the House of Commons, with those who held any civil or military office, were required to swear allegiance to the Commonwealth "without King or House of Lords." A new great seal was adopted having on one side a map of England and Ireland, on the other a representation of the House of Commons in sesson, with the words "In the first year of freedom, by God's blessing restored."

The greatest Englishman, Cromwell, did all these things. The end certainly justified a rod of iron. It was the only way in those troublous times after the tyrant Charles I. was beheaded. The country got along very well without the Lords for ten years under Protector Cromwell, and it can do it now.

Since the reactionary Charles II., who came to the throne in 1660, the House of Lords has proved to be "useless and dangerous," and is more so than ever today. Its elimination as a factor of legislation in the near future is inevitable.

Some Dangers From High Prices

By Elizabeth Hewes

EVERY one is talking high prices. But my topic is different. I wish to talk not on the high prices themselves, but on their dangers, the chief dangers being, of course, to that trunk class of a nation, the small-salaried man, the clerk, the shop-girl. The present high prices are affecting this class in two ways; first, they are tending to force them down rather than up in the social scale; second, they are putting them to such stress that they are tending to become an underfed class, under-nourished, and certainly the danger of having the great trunk class of a nation under-nourished cannot be overrated.

Well, I don't pretend to know the causes of high prices, but this I do know: that I am today paying 8 cents more for my steak, 7 cents more for eggs, 7 cents more for butter than I was last year; that a better class of people than heretofore is beginning to try and evade the compulsory education law, and that certain shop-girls whom I know have reduced their lunches from chicken on toast with rice border to an eclair and a cup of coffee. In other words, our great, prosperous (?) country stands at the parting of the ways. A little more, and you will have the trunk class of America an underfed class, being slowly but surely forced down in the social scale. The laboring man, the miner, the servant girl (who are being paid more) will force their children up into the clerk class only to have their children stick there or return to them. This would no longer be American.

This that I say is true, and it seems to me to merit the attention of all thoughtful Americans who care for their country.—American Magazine.

The Cost of Living

By Stewart Browne

IT does not require a Congressional investigation to discover the causes for "increased cost of living," as they speak for themselves.

The population of the United States has increased 25 per cent. in the last ten years, and the following is the increase in the quantity of foodstuffs during the same period.

Corn, 20 per cent.; wheat 20 per cent.; oats, 10 per cent.; barley, 100 per cent.; rye, 15 per cent.; buckwheat, 0 per cent.; sheep, 40 per cent.; cattle, 2 per cent.; horses, 1 per cent.; butter, 350 per cent.; cheese, 0 per cent, and milk, 350 per cent.

The production of foodstuffs has not kept pace with the increase in population; that is the basic cause for the increased cost of living.

The second cause is that the earning power of the people during the same period has increased 25 per cent., which means a greater demand from them for foodstuffs and a greater number who are willing to pay higher prices, havinv the wherewith so to do.

The third cause is that all beef and poultry is controlled absolutely by the packers, who, finding that the quantity does not keep pace with the increasing population and that the people have more money to spend, force the prices up to the utmost limit that the people are willing to pay.

The fourth cause is cold storage. Destroy cold storage and the third cause would fall with it. Cold storage, as practiced in the United States, is unnecessary, harmful to the stomachs of the people and injurious to their pockets. Cold storage is unknown in Europe, and if Europe can get along without it the United States can. The packers and cold storage exploit the appetites of the nation for the benefit of the packers' pockets.

"Leaving the farm" for the "lure of the city" is caused by universal education making the younger generation above their business. "Back to the farm," if it ever happens, which is doubtful, will never happen until the empty stomachs of the people force them there.

Possibly chemistry may produce a substitute for natural foodstuffs, but until "back to the farm" becomes a reality or chemistry produces a substitute foodstuffs must increase in price.

Increased gold production has nothing to do with "increased prices," and the tariff has very little.

Power House Accident.

A curious accident occurred at the No. 3 power house of the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing company on Sunday afternoon, July 25th, by which two employes were injured. The casing of one of the new 10,000 horsepower turbines burst and a large piece of casting was thrown across the station, which was partly flooded by the outrush of water. The turbine was under the normal head of about 165 feet of water, but had been tested to a much higher pressure.—Scientific American.

Useful and Ornamental.

Gillis—Great Scott, man! What do you call that thing?

Willis—We decided at our house this year that we would give only useful presents, and this is the beautiful, embroidered, hand-painted snow shovel that my wife gave me.—Puck.

A shovel with high, sharp sides and with a hinged blade that lifts away from the front, has been patented by a New Jersey resident to cut and lift sods.

THE MILLENNIUM.

The happy time is coming
When we'll all ride in the air;
Change our motors for new airships
And have plenty space to spare,
When we'll have no labor troubles
And when capital will cease
From piling up its riches,
But both pass the kiss of peace.

Yes, the time is surely coming
When all living will be cheap,
Meats and eggs be fresh as springtime,
No cold storage crop to reap,
When the poor but honest people
Will be happy without fail,
With a law that's most impartial,
And trust magnates go to jail.

There's no doubt the time is coming
When e'en school boards are at rest,
When no one will swear off taxes,
But just pay what they're assessed,
Nay, in this wondrous time that's coming,
Where no noxious germs will lurk,
The people will see likely
Legislatures do real work.

—Baltimore American.

The Verdict of the Book

By Emma E. Manning

It was a queer place, that second-hand bookstore. The battered volumes of all possible shapes and sizes were queer, and so were many of those who came to examine them, prey to interest in some one subject that was often almost a mania. Books and callers were alike largely shabby, and queerness reigned in the store.

When Dorothy Clarke entered the place as an attendant she had thought the room spooky and the books disagreeable ghosts, but the feeling wore away, especialy as not all the books were ancient and not all the callers eccentric. Alert, well-dressed men came with others, searching for volumes on practical subjects. She had been employed six months, when a young man of good appearance walked briskly in during Mr. Templemore's lunch hour. Bowing formally, he addressed her with courtesy.

"Have you any old-time medical works?" he asked. "You see, I am a doctor, and I like to pass a part of my leisure hours reading what physicians thought about medicine generations ago. That will hardly appeal to you—please pardon me."

She led the way and swept her hand along the proper shelf.

"Whew!" he exclaimed. "Ancient wisdom by the yard."

His laugh rang out cheerfully, after which he was immersed in investigation for twenty minutes. In the end he purchased an inexpensive treatise and departed. He was only one of many customers, and she forgot him in a few moments, but it was not his only call. Those battered old books, warriors of past battles with disease, had such a fascination for him that he came often. His purchases were few, but he examined largely, often asking questions in his polite way.

An acquaintance was established between them in a degree, and then she had a surprise one Sunday at church. Without warning a friend introduced her to "Dr. Clifton." She lifted her eyes and saw the young man of the bookstore calls.

After that they met often. He made her church his, and, always courteous, sought her presence persistently. Her mother noticed the fact, made inquiries, and saw no reason to object. Twice he took Dorothy to some place of amusement, though she was not certain that she enjoyed herself greatly. She was of two minds as to Dr. Clifton, and he was himself responsible for her doubts. Brief as their acquaintance was he had half-assumed an air of proprietorship which she was not ready to concede, and other things partly offset his undeniably good qualities. Her mind was a scale in which she was weighing him.

"Miss Clarke," said Mr. Templemore one afternoon, "have you sold that copy of 'The London Dispensatory,' printed by John Allen in 1720?"

"No, sir," she answered.

"Misplaced by some customer probably. Will you look along the shelves?"

She searched, but the volume was not found. The proprietor betrayed his vexation.

"Another book thief!" he grumbled, "and it was worth more than the $25 I asked for it. It was rare, rare! Somebody was tempted beyond his powers of resistance."

With this he began unpacking a case of books, but he left Dorothy thoughtful. Two weeks before Dr. Clifton had discovered "The London Dispensatory," and grown enthusiastic over it, but had shaken his head at the price. Twenty-five dollars, for a book not of practical use looked large. In spite of that he came day after day, taking the volume down, reading greedily, and sighing as he replaced it. Once, too, after replacing it on the shelf, he had gazed at its cover and fallen into a deep study that lasted several minutes. Clearly, he longed for the ancient treatise.

Now it was gone. Dorothy wondered—but it seemed absurd. The doctor's social position ought to make him free from suspicion, she argued. Mr. Templemore was not to be consoled. "The London Dispensatory" lay heavily upon his mind, he still had periods of searching for it, and spoke of it oftener than he hunted. Meanwhile, Dorothy considered very seriously. Now that it was gone Dr. Clifton came no more to the store, and she recalled that, previously, he had come only during the proprietor's lunch hour. Her wavering ended, and, though she assured herself that it was only a coincidence, she told Mr. Templemore everything.

"Hump!" he murmured. "Thank you! Still, I think the young man is a regular doctor, and it is hardly probable—but I thank you!"

A week passed, and then Dr. Clifton appeared when Mr. Templemore was present, walked to where he stood by Dorothy's side and held out a book.

Dorothy looked and grew startled. "The London Dispensatory" was back. Very likely her face expressed unspeakable things, for Clifton suddenly broke into a hearty laugh.

"Ha, ha, ha! Pardon me, Miss Clarke, but it's too good to carry further. Let me own up, right now, that I'm a nephew of Mr. Templemore, and that I've indulged in an innocent plot, after arguing long to make him agree. Frankly, I wanted to see if you would betray me if I seemed to be a thief. You have stood the test nobly—Dorothy. I'm proud of you; it was grand loyalty in you not to mention my interest in this book!"

She flushed and then turned white. Here was the old, objectionable element in the man, the implied possession of her; while the trick exasperated her. She drew back a pace, her eyes flashing.

"You make some mistakes, sir!" she restored, "and one of them is your assumption that I have not told Mr. Templemore. I told him all. It is my duty to help protect his interests, not to work against them."

Clifton grew downcast before what he heard and suspected, but Mr. Templemore was clearly delighted.

"There you have it, young man!" he exclaimed. "You asked me yesterday if she had told, and possibly my choice of words seemed like no, but if you will recall them you will see that I evaded direct reply. As for this book, Miss Clarke, that foolish fellow asked my leave to his carrying out his scheme of bogus theft. I objected, at first, but he said he wanted to test you, and it occurred to me that it was a good chance for me to test you, also. I am greatly pleased. If you had remained silent when one of my volumes was stolen it would have been otherwise, but you have been faithful to the interests of your employer, and that is a splendid thing in this world. Thank you kindly, Miss Clarke. Now, I'll let you young people settle your own matters."

It was Dorothy who did the "settling." She had been placed in an uncomfortable position by the doctor's stratagem, and she gave him no chance to repeat. Now, when he reads his medical books he sometimes thinks of her, but he goes no more to the store.—Boston Post.

GERMAN SPIES IN ENGLAND?

Story About Teutonic Waiter Recalls Our Japanese Butler Scares.

The "menace" with which Americans became familiar during the "threat" of a Japanese-American war and which generally took the form of Japanese butlers who were really spies is now getting in its same old deadly work in England. Over there the "threat" is of an Anglo-German war; so the "menace" naturally becomes a Teutonic waiter.

Under the heading "A Real Menace" a man writes to the Gentlewoman as follows:

"I must confess that without being in the least a scaremonger the presence of such crowds of foreigners in our midst does not tend to make one feel altogether comfortable. Most of all does the German waiter flourish at all the restaurants, whether smart or otherwise, all over this great London of ours, and in case of an invasion from overseas what part would these gentry play in the general commotion?

"By way of answer I will repeat a story that is now being told in the clubs on the best authority. A gentleman of English birth, but possessing in a marked degree the gift of tongues, entered a well known restaurant with the air of being a German. He was soon on easy terms with the Teuton who of course attended to his creature comforts. Before leaving he requested a few minutes private conversation with the kellner, who by that time had become expansive.

"'Have you,' quoth the linguist in most fluent German, 'your orders for when the great moment arrives?'

"'Oh, certainly!' replied the waiter 'We all know exactly where to go and what to do'"

A Good Man.

He was a good man, my father was, an' his usual form of address to me was "my son," thess so, unadorned, an' I don't know but it's helped me all my life. It sort o' challenges a boy to be called "my son" by a good man.—Ruth McEnery Stuart, in Century.

SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT

Prof. Herdman, lecturing at the British Royal institution, and describing how to tell the age of a fish, said the lines on the scales of the herring are lines of annual growth. The number of lines on the bones are another indication.

While a leaf of gold is so thin that it is impossible to measure its thickness, scales have been made which weigh it accurately. One leaf weighs one-fifth of a grain. It is so light that a breath will blow it away. Held to the light, it is translucent and greenish.

The first Edison medal of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers was awarded to Prof. Elihu Thomson for his achievements in electricity, on the occasion of the anniversary dinner of the Institute. This medal was founded by friends of Mr. Edison, and is intended to commemorate his work. —Scientific American.

Swelling ground cannot be held by timber; means must be provided for relieving the pressure of the ground from time to time. It will cause little trouble if spaces are left between the lagging, through which the pressure may be eased at intervals by removing some of the material. Expedients such as packing with straw are valuable only until the swelling becomes sufficient to pack tightly the cushioning substance. When this becomes packed solidly it transmits the pressure to the timbers.—Scientific American.

The blue rays emitted by the mercury vapor lamps have bacterical properties which are being experimented with for the purpose of making use of them in the sterilization of drinking water. It has been demonstrated that a lamp of nine amperes and 135 volts, suspended in an ordinary cask was very effective in purifying the water. All bacteria (including the coil bacillus and Eberth's bacillus) within 12 inches of the lamp were killed in two minutes. A long series of experiments proved conclusively that one minute suffices for complete sterilization in ordinary cases, and two minutes when the water is very greatly contaminated, either naturally or artificially. The water, however, must be clear, in order that the rays may pass through it. The elevation of temperature is only a fraction of a degree and the water, after treatment, is harmless to plants and animals. Hence it appears practicable to sterilize the water supply of a city (after clarification, if necessary) by distributing powerful quartz mercury vapor lamps in the reservoirs or the mains in such a manner that every particle of water shall remain two minutes within a few inches of the lamp.

Substitute for Costly Furs.

Skunk often is made to serve as a passable imitation of sable, just as white coney fur often passes as ermine. The skin of the ordinary red fox, dyed black, is often mistaken for genuine lynx; opossum, colored a soft, smoky gray, for silver fox, and the so-called Hudson seal, which is offered as a cheaper substitute for sealskin, is really only the skin of the ordinary Paris rat, cleverly treated. The demand for skunk skins has grown so much recently that a man who started a skunk farm about two years ago, keeping the animals in enclosures and breeding them for the market, has made a handsome thing out of it. Fisher fur, which is now "the" fashionable fur, has attained a vogue that has puzzled the merchants, who are having all they can do to keep up with the demand. Twelve months ago a good fisher skin could be bought for $25 or $30, but now the price runs up to $100, and unless the demands of fashion change it may be twice as high next winter.—New York Press.

Rio's Dock System.

Rio Janeiro proposes to construct the greatest dock system in South America, if not in the whole western hemisphere. The plans call for about ten miles of docks, in addition to the two miles already provided for. The idea is that the additional docks shall consist at first of three great piers built at a distance of 1,115 feet from each other. Completed, these docks will have a frontage of 63,320 feet, or about twelve miles. The additions planned will cost about $19,000,000.

Losing His Nerve.

Bus Driver—Ain't ye satisfied with runnin' over people? Yer wants to run over the 'osses now?

Taxi Driver (indignantly)—I haven't run over anybody for a long time.

Bus Driver—What! Are ye gettin' nervous?—London Opinion.

Salmon, pike and goldfish are said to be the only fish that never sleep.